

**Trip to Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and
Romania
August 30 to September 3, 1999**

**A
Report
to
The United States Senate**

by

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Committee on Foreign Relations**

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Introduction

I traveled to Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Romania from August 30 to September 3, 1999. I am pleased to submit to my Colleagues in the United States Senate the following observations and recommendations from my seventh trip to the Balkan region since 1993.

I wish to thank the United States Mission in Kosovo, the Embassies of the United States in Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Sofia, Bulgaria; and Bucharest, Romania; and the European Command and the United States Air Force Europe for their outstanding cooperation, which made the success of the trip possible.

Accompanying me on the trip were Edwin K Hall, Minority Staff Director, Committee on Foreign Relations; Dr. Michael H. Haltzel, Professional Staff Member, Committee on Foreign Relations; Thomas G. Lewis III, a Member of my Personal Staff responsible for defense issues; and Captain Glen Woods USN, Senate Navy Liaison Office. For most of the trip I was joined by Edward Kaufman, Member, Broadcasting Board of Governors; and Bruce Sherman, Staff Member, Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Recommendations

I found that the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, under the imaginative leadership of Bernard Kouchner, though somewhat timid and constrained by the UN bureaucracy in New York, is much better prepared than was the United Nations Mission in Bosnia after the Dayton Accords.

KFOR, under the robust leadership of Lt. General Sir Michael Jackson, is in much better shape, exhibiting an improved coordination with the United Nations that has been exemplified by the excellent personal and professional relations established between Kouchner and Jackson. I hope that this partnership will be maintained when Jackson is replaced by a German general next month.

An important key to success in Kosovo will be getting the civilian police effort underway. Not enough of the heavily armed specialized constabulary or "gendarmerie" have been planned for, and the Europeans should increase their commitment to this important aspect of security in Kosovo. In addition, more resources must be devoted to recruiting and training the Kosovo police service,

which will take time.

Although KFOR and the UN may have overestimated both the ability of Hashim Thaci to control the KLA and the vitality of the Kosovar shadow government under Serbian rule, transforming the KLA into a civilian “Kosovo Protection Corps” and building a civilian infrastructure capable of providing essential services within Kosovo are clear immediate priorities for KFOR and the UN.

The United Nations Mission appeared to be in relatively good shape to provide continued emergency relief and temporary housing assistance to the people of Kosovo as winter is approaching, with adequate funding to help the people launch an extensive housing rebuilding program in the spring.

We must be cautious about pushing for early local elections and make certain that a truly free press and a television network with equal access to all political parties are set up and ready several months prior to those elections.

Although the conditions in the four countries visited vary widely, several common policy threads emerge from my trip

First, the multi-ethnic character of the Balkans, replete with centuries of complex human interactions, does not lend itself to rapid solutions of its problems. Patience is called for.

Second, a regional perspective is necessary. Few, if any, of the difficulties in each of the four countries can be treated in isolation, whether it is refugee returns, clearing the Danube, or economic development.

Third, I found an overwhelming skepticism from leaders of the region regarding the desire or ability of the European countries to follow through with implementation of the recent Balkan Stability Pact and actually to integrate these countries into Western Europe in the long run.

Fourth, the temptation to compromise our principles out of short-term expediency must be resisted as almost certainly detrimental to our long-term goals. Acquiescing in the results of ethnic cleansing by “cantonization” in Kosovo, or being half-hearted in the pursuit of indicted war criminals there and in Bosnia come immediately to mind.

Finally, the United States remains the single indispensable country in the search for stability in the Balkans. The various peoples of the region harbor deep skepticism of the West Europeans' motives and reliability; only the United States has universal credibility. While we should make certain that our West European partners carry the overwhelming bulk of the burden of pacifying and rebuilding Southeast Europe, we dare not throw up our hands in frustration and walk away. The Balkans remain critical to our national interest, and we must remain involved for the long haul.

Kosovo

After intensive discussions with the international civilian and military leadership, with the American diplomatic officers in Kosovo, and with the leadership of the Kosovo Liberation Army and other Kosovo political figures, I concluded that the United States must be prepared to be involved in a long-term, difficult process of reconstruction and democratization in Kosovo.

The first stage of activity of UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) and of KFOR (Kosovo Force) has been promising -- somewhat better than most media reports. The final legal status of Kosovo remains uncertain, but the province clearly must not revert to the direct control of Belgrade. The international community should not feel under any pressure to reach a decision on the final legal status in the near future.

The United States Army has done a superb job in setting up its headquarters and in undertaking pacification missions in the U.S. Sector of Kosovo. I met with Brigadier General William Brandenburg, USA, Deputy Commander of KFOR, at KFOR Headquarters in Pristina. In the eighty days since KFOR began its operations, the murder rate in Kosovo dropped from thirty per day to eight per day. There are several reasons for this drop:

1. KFOR has good HUMINT (human intelligence) -- the soldiers on the ground know who the hoodlums are.
2. Kosovo's economy is starting up again
3. Most of the revenge killings have already occurred.
4. KFOR has established a modicum of trust with the Kosovars and with the Kosovo Serbs.

5. UNMIK has increased its capabilities.

In the U.S. Sector, the American commander told the KLA that he was holding them responsible for the killings. Shortly thereafter the murder rate began to decline significantly.

Nonetheless, armed confrontations between ethnic Albanians and Serbs in the U.S. Sector and in Kosovska Mitrovica in the French Sector remain a vexing problem.

I also visited Camp Bondsteel in the southeastern part of Kosovo, commanded by Brigadier General Joseph Peterson, USA. The camp's sandbagged entry gate provided an uplifting introduction. Five U.S. Army soldiers were on guard: an Asian-American man, an African-American woman, an African-American man, a European-American woman, and a European-American man.

Camp Bondsteel is an impressive site. The U.S. Army has set up shop on a high plateau, which until just before my arrival had been hot and dusty; I saw it as a sea of mud, the result of torrential rains. Nonetheless, troop morale seemed very high. The soldiers had no difficulty understanding the rationale for, and importance of, their mission. Several dozen patrols are being sent out of Camp Bondsteel and Camp Montieth, northeast of Bondsteel, each day.

Inevitably, until UNMIK civilian officials, particularly civilian police, are deployed throughout the province, KFOR troops, including American troops, will perform essentially civilian functions along with their normal military ones. I was assured, however, by Dr. Bernard Kouchner, Head U.N. Administrator for Kosovo, and his American deputy Jock Covey that all 1,800 regular international civilian police, plus a 205-member border police unit will be in place by mid-September. The 1,125-member, heavily armed specialized constabulary or "gendarmerie" should be fully deployed by mid-October. During my visit, UNMIK completed the assumption of policing duties for all of Pristina. Unlike the international police in Bosnia, the Kosovo international police are armed.

In addition, UNMIK is responsible for identifying, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for training, a 3,000-member Kosovo Police Service. An OSCE-run police academy, located in the town of Vucitrn and headed by an American, has begun operation, although nearly all Kosovo Serb recruits have been intimidated into backing away from participation. Even if the

police training is successful, I strongly feel that far more native police officers will be necessary in order effectively and equitably to guarantee law and order throughout Kosovo.

One fundamental improvement in Kosovo over the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately after the Dayton Accords in November 1995 is that the NATO-led military and the U.N. are cooperating extremely well. Lieutenant General Sir Michael Jackson, the British KFOR commander, and Dr. Kouchner, a Frenchman, obviously get along famously and are working together efficiently.

Another example of excellent cooperation concerns the Russian KFOR contingent, which General Jackson called "highly professional." I was, therefore, not surprised two days later by the Russian troops' shooting of Kosovo Serbs in the village of Ranilug who had killed an ethnic Albanian and were beating others.

Kouchner and Covey were outspoken in their belief that the U.N. should not try to impose a "colonial" administration on Kosovo. They emphasized that Kosovo isn't part of the Third World. The Kosovars ran the province from 1974 until 1989, and after Slobodan Milosevic stripped Kosovo of its autonomy, the ethnic Albanians set up an unofficial parallel administration.

I think the UN fear of appearing as a colonial power is greatly overestimated, as well as the assertion that there was an effective unofficial parallel government.

The plan advocated by Dr. Kouchner is to create an "inclusive administration," one which engages the provincial population. Of course, this concept immediately begs the question of how one includes the KLA. Indeed, the issue of the "transformation" of the KLA is arguably the single most important current topic in Kosovo.

On the ground the reality is that the U.N. may not have much of a choice. After the Yugoslav Army (VJ), the Serbian Interior Ministry Special Police (MUP), and Serbian paramilitaries withdrew in mid-June -- and before the U.N. could establish itself -- the KLA understandably moved in to fill the power vacuum. As a result, 27 of the 29 mayors of the towns in Kosovo either are KLA members or take their orders from the KLA.

The litmus-test is whether the KLA truly intends to abide by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) and the Military-Technical Agreement (MTA), the demilitarization document signed on June 20, 1999. The KLA pledged to surrender the remainder of its automatic weapons and its uniforms. Thereafter, no one may wear a KLA uniform or carry any weapons except sidearms or

hunting rifles. In order to set up the "Kosovo Protection Corps," a civil emergency organization discussed below, KFOR granted a one-day technical postponement.

I met with Mr. Thaci, a bright, ambitious thirty-year old with a reputation for ruthlessness. I emphasized to him the absolute necessity of complying fully with their commitment. Moreover, I made clear my understanding that the KLA is a diverse group, with several zone commanders exercising authority independent of Thaci.

For his part, Thaci declared that the KLA is America's most reliable partner in the Balkans. He said that he expected definitive word on a final solution for Kosovo after a three-year period, and he pledged cooperation with KFOR and UNMIK during that time. Thaci made clear his hope that Kosovo's Serbs would remain, although he warned that Milosevic had infiltrated VJ, MUP, Serbian paramilitaries, and Serbian intelligence operatives back into the province, an assertion subsequently confirmed by NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe General Wesley Clark.

KFOR confirmed that Milosevic had sent thugs from Serbia to stir up trouble in Kosovska Mitrovica, where local Kosovars were being barred from returning to their homes in the northern half of the town. Milosevic seems to be trying to lay the groundwork for a "cantonization" of Kosovo, which would give the Serbs the northern part containing the valuable mines and geographic contiguity with Serbia proper.

Thaci quoted statistics that since the Yugoslav military had left Kosovo, 90 ethnic Albanians and 74 ethnic Serbs had been killed. He further asserted that the KLA had not organized the violence against Kosovo Serbs, claiming that most of the killings had taken place immediately following the evacuation and that many of them were against people who had taken part in atrocities. Obviously, any killings are deplorable, but the above-cited numbers pale in comparison with the estimated ten thousand Kosovars slaughtered by the VJ, MUP, and paramilitaries from March to June of this year.

The U.N. initially grossly overestimated the number of Serbs that fled Kosovo, saying that only 20,000 to 25,000 of a prewar population of 180,000 to 200,000 were left. This figure was routinely quoted by the international media. KFOR General Brandenburg, however, told me that many Serbs who left their

villages remained in the province, but regathered in majority-Serb areas. KFOR's best estimate, he said, was that fully 105,000 Serbs remain in Kosovo. On September 11, the U.N. drastically revised its own estimate upward to 97,000.

I indicated to Thaci that if the KLA did not live up to its promises, including their commitment to surrender weapons, it would be squandering a unique opportunity. I said that if the KLA bungled the transformation to democracy, the West would not bomb the Serbs again. I also told him he should not overestimate how important the KFOR powers thought he was, nor how much control he had over those who asserted they were KLA.

Veton Surroi, the highly respected editor of "Koha Ditore," the largest daily newspaper in Kosovo, who is also a member of the Transitional Council organized by UNMIK head Kouchner, took a somewhat different view from UNMIK and from Thaci regarding the civilian administration of the province. While he agreed that including locals is essential, Surroi felt, first, that democratic home-rule is impossible under current conditions, and, second, that most people would prefer a temporary, truly democratic U.N.-run administration to a locally-run, undemocratic one.

This issue is crystallized in Dr. Kouchner's desire to prepare for local elections next spring, perhaps as early as April 2000. Surroi feels, as I do, that this timetable is unrealistic. Currently intimidation of non-KLA ethnic Albanians is going on. Kosovo is in a post-revolutionary situation, and early elections would not allow non-KLA forces adequate time to organize.

After on-site inspections and meetings, I was even more certain of this assessment. For I believe that early elections in Bosnia resulted in entrenching the three nationalist parties and thereby contributing to undermining the integrative aspects of the Dayton Accords.

Subsequent to my return, however, Dr. Kouchner called a meeting of the various political factions in Kosovo for the end of September, as the first step in planning local elections for next spring.

The primary immediate task is to provide adequate shelter and food for all people in Kosovo before the snow flies in October. UNMIK and international non-governmental organizations are racing to complete this task.

Dr. Kouchner is using the multi-ethnic Transitional Council, which he

chairs, to oversee so-called provincial “ministries” of health, education, public works, and social services, which are jointly run by UNMIK and local authorities. This structure is being replicated at the local level.

I had hoped to meet with Momcilo Trajkovic, head of the Serbian Resistance Movement, and Father Save of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Unfortunately they did not show up for the scheduled meeting. Instead, I made a side trip to the village of Gracanica, site of a venerated fourteenth-century Serbian Orthodox Monastery. Two British KFOR troops were guarding the entrance to the monastery, which the delegation was permitted to visit. Later that day, unknown persons kidnaped a Serb from the village of Gracanica, resulting two days later in a five-hour protest demonstration against the British KFOR troops.

Although the phrase “cautious optimism” is a dangerous one to use in connection with the Balkans, I came away with the impression that conditions are not as bad as the media have described them. As stated earlier, the international military and civilian authorities are cooperating much better than they did in the initial stages of the Bosnia deployment. The KLA leadership, if not all the rank-and-file, also seem aware of the fact that it is squarely in their interest to cooperate with KFOR and UNMIK.

While I continue to believe that local elections should not be held next spring, it is clear that the Kosovar population must be given a sense that movement toward some kind of self-rule is taking place. That fact, plus the immediate imperative to take concrete steps to prevent the KLA from going underground account for the announcement in early September of the formation of a “Kosovo Corps,” which would be involved in disaster response, search and rescue operations, humanitarian assistance in isolated areas, demining, and rebuilding some infrastructure. In the final agreement signed on September 20, it was renamed the “Kosovo Protection Corps.” The concept of the Kosovo Protection Corps makes sense, as long as KFOR maintains strict oversight so that it does not become a fig-leaf for a KLA-run army.

Whether in the long-term a democratic, multi-ethnic society can be built in Kosovo is questionable. The *sine qua non* for such a development is a democratic government in Belgrade that respects the rights of non-Serbs in Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, neither Milosevic, nor most of the Serbian opposition, appears ready to adopt this policy.

What is not questionable is the importance to American national interests of creating stability in the Balkans, beginning with rebuilding shattered Kosovo. A long-term, bipartisan commitment to U.S. involvement in this task is essential.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

I had a truly remarkable working dinner in Sarajevo, which brought together the largest group of Bosnian leaders since the Dayton Accords, perhaps even more comprehensive. I had an opportunity to address those attending the dinner, hosted by newly arrived U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia Thomas Miller, as did U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Richard Holbrooke, and Alija Izetbegovic, the Bosniak Member of the Bosnian Collective Presidency.

Also attending the dinner were: Joint Presidency Chair Ante Jelavic; Joint Presidency Member Zivko Radisic; Council of Ministers Co-Chairs Haris Silajdzic and Svetozar Mihajlovic and Deputy Co-Chair Neven Tomic; Bosnian Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic; Federation President Ivo Andric-Luzanski and Vice President Ejup Ganic; Federation Prime Minister Edhem Bicakcic and Deputy Prime Minister Dragan Covic; Republika Srpska Prime Minister Milorad Dodik; opposition party leaders Zlatko Lagumdzija (SDP), Gradimir Goyer (VP of the SDP), Kresimir Zubak (NHI), Ivo Komsic (former leader, Croatian Peasants' Party), and Mirko Pejanovic (Serb Civic Council).

Many countries present societal contradictions, but Bosnia and Herzegovina offers more than most. Fundamental problems persist nearly four years after the Dayton Accords. Hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons still wait to return to their homes. The brutal war that claimed up to a quarter-million lives engendered deep and lingering distrust among the three major communities -- Muslim Bosniaks, Orthodox Serbs, and Catholic Croats. As a result, the national institutions created by Dayton range in performance from weak to non-functioning. Despite noticeable progress in small business start-ups, unemployment continues to be very high, and the heavily subsidized, inefficient economy desperately needs thoroughgoing reform. Finally, pervasive corruption is a cancer in the system, which prevents progress in all fields, particularly in the foreign investment that is essential to recovery.

This depressing list is, however, not the only story. The domestic security situation has improved dramatically. Basically, IFOR, and then SFOR, have

accomplished their mission of separating, and then disarming the warring parties. There have even been tentative contacts between the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Army of the Republika Srpska. Former High Representative Carlos Westendorp utilized his proconsular powers broadly and effectively, including creating a common license plate for the entire country, enabling vehicular traffic to flow normally between the Federation and the Republika Srpska. Although an international military presence is still necessary, plans have been announced drastically to reduce the number of SFOR troops.

In addition, last spring's war in Yugoslavia has given Bosnia a second chance and has created a new spirit of cooperation in the country's leadership. The hundred-percent participation of politicians from all groups in the above-mentioned dinner in Sarajevo was one dramatic signal of the change; two years ago, the Bosnian Serbs had boycotted a similar dinner in Sarajevo that I hosted. This year at the dinner the two leading, democratically elected moderate Bosnian Serbs -- Member of the Collective Presidency Radisic and Prime Minister of the Republika Srpska Dodik -- were outspoken in their commitment to a multi-religious Bosnia.

As a result of Milosevic's fourth lost war in this decade, and the ruined Serbian economy, the attraction of a "Greater Serbia" has significantly diminished. Many, perhaps most, Bosnian Serbs have ceased looking to Belgrade and are beginning to cast their lot with Bosnia.

Even the arrest in Vienna and indictment for war crimes of the commander of the Bosnian Serb Army has not halted the participation of the current Bosnian Serb leadership in national Bosnian institutions. This is a clear indication that the search for, and apprehension of, indicted war criminals should be pursued with renewed vigor, especially of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

Meanwhile, the Bosnian Croat community is deeply divided. Croatia's authoritarian President Franjo Tudjman still calls the shots for the Bosnian branch of his Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), but he is reported to be gravely ill. The intra-party jockeying in Zagreb for succession, plus the excellent chance given the democratic opposition in upcoming parliamentary elections, have weakened the HDZ hold in Bosnia. A new, pro-Dayton party founded last year by former Collective Presidency Member Kresimir Zubak commands the loyalty of significant numbers of ethnic Croats from central and northern Bosnia, and several Croats are prominent in the non-nationalist Social Democratic Party.

In the wake of the Kosovo war, for the first time virtually every policymaker

in Bosnia, as elsewhere in the Balkans, is thinking regionally. The Stability Pact for Southeast Europe is seen as a “silver bullet” for curing the region’s economic woes, although there is a good deal of skepticism in some quarters about the West Europeans’ likely contributions.

At the Sarajevo dinner, I implored the country’s leadership to seize the moment by organizing immediate, large-scale returns of minority-group refugees and displaced persons, by creating an independent judiciary and police system, and by carrying out an honest privatization of the economy -- all steps that are necessary to attract foreign investment. If this opportunity is squandered, I warned, Bosnia could spiral downward while its Balkan neighbors prepare to join the rest of Europe.

In order to move the Bosnians toward these actions, I recommend the following “tough love” policies:

- * The U.S. should continue to make economic assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina conditional on cooperation on Dayton implementation through detailed agreements between USAID and individual localities.
- * The U.S. Government should work within the new Stability Pact for Southeast Europe to condition assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina on fulfillment of specific conditions, including fixed numbers and timetables of returning displaced persons and refugees to their original homes.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria has made dramatic progress since a democratic, free-market government under President Petar Stoyanov and Prime Minister Ivan Kostov of the anti-communist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) returned to power in April 1997.

During my meeting with President Stoyanov, he told me that the Kosovo war had shown there are no longer purely local conflicts. He enthusiastically agreed with me that Europe in the twenty-first century cannot remain stable unless the Balkans are integrated into the rest of the continent. President Stoyanov emphatically rejected any biological explanation for the recent violence in the region, identifying the cause as the vestiges of communism, rather than a “Balkan mentality.” He reminded me that Bulgaria had rescued all of its 50,000 Jewish citizens during World War II and in the 1990's had reversed the communist government’s persecution of ethnic Turks. Democracy, Stoyanov underscored, is the key to stability in the Balkans.

During the Kosovo war, the Bulgarian Government behaved courageously. Despite hostile public opinion, inflamed by four errant NATO missiles which struck Bulgarian territory, the Bulgarian Parliament voted to grant NATO use of its air space.

Diplomatically, Bulgaria has conducted a mature policy toward the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, despite the nearly universal conviction that the Macedonian language is but a dialect of Bulgarian and Macedonians are essentially Bulgarians. In addition, Bulgaria has cultivated excellent relations with its northern and southern neighbors -- Romania, Turkey, and Greece -- and has managed to hold onto passably good ties with Serbia on the west.

Part of the credit for these recent diplomatic successes goes to the talented and charming Foreign Minister Nadezhda Mikhaylova, who has professional experience in the U.S. Congress and at Harvard University. Foreign Minister Mikhaylova explained Bulgaria's policy during the recent war as a matter of taking, or not taking, responsibility. This decision is particularly difficult for post-communist societies, because under communist rule there was no need to take any responsibility, even for one's own life.

Mikhaylova cautioned that it is imperative to formulate a general strategy for the Balkans. Bulgaria is proud of having become an "island of stability," but if there isn't stability elsewhere in the region, the "waves will eventually wash over the island," she said.

The government will utilize the upcoming local election campaign to educate the Bulgarian people about Kosovo and to show them that the Bulgarian national interest is part of the general European interest. The foreign minister warned, however, that if Kosovo fails to build a multi-ethnic society, it will compromise NATO by making it look as if the alliance had a hidden agenda in its intervention.

In several meetings in Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, the problem of transnational organized crime was raised. This is, in all probability, currently the most serious security threat to Bulgaria. President Stoyanov and the parliamentary leadership assured me that the government was taking energetic steps to combat it, including trying to build an independent judiciary.

Bulgaria's principal foreign policy objectives are gaining membership in NATO and the European Union. Defense Minister Georgi Ananiev described an ambitious "Plan 2004" that involves downsizing and restructuring the Bulgarian Armed Forces, creating a Rapid Reaction Force, building an Air Sovereignty Operations Center (ASOC), and taking part in a new multinational peacekeeping force with its headquarters in Bulgaria.

I applauded the Bulgarian Government on its efforts to meet the NATO criteria, but warned them against setting the bar too high and thereby arousing unrealistic expectations. Bulgaria will probably not enter NATO in the next round of enlargement, but if it holds to its present course it will be a strong candidate in the one after that.

The United States should do all it can to encourage Bulgaria in its reform efforts. In that regard, President Clinton plans to stop off in Bulgaria on his way to the OSCE summit in Turkey in the fall. A high-level delegation headed by Commerce Secretary Daley and including the heads of the ExIm Bank and OPIC, plus corporate CEO's also will visit Bulgaria in November.

Romania

Romania is the largest and most important country in the Balkans. The progressive, democratic, free-market administration of President Emil Constantinescu and Prime Minister Radu Vasile is grappling with the legacy of Nicolae Ceausescu's decades-long tyranny and post-Ceausescu mismanagement earlier in this decade. The country, already in a severe economic crisis, suffered further damage as a result of the Kosovo war, during which it opened its air space to NATO, despite strong pro-Serbian feelings among the Romanian populace.

President Constantinescu and Prime Minister Vasile, who are political rivals despite being members of the same party, both said, independent of each other, that the United States has friends in the Balkans more because of its principles than because of its might. Kosovo, they said, was about principles, about democracy being put into question.

It is imperative for Balkan stability that Serbia democratize. President Constantinescu emphasized the unique role that Romania can play in assisting the anti-Milosevic democratic forces. Romania shares the Orthodox faith with Serbia and has historically always had good relations with it. In the Serbian province of Vojvodina there is a large ethnic Romanian minority, which maintains close relations with Romania. Romania has on-the-ground information about conditions in Serbia and has extensive contacts with the Serbian democrats. Above all, Serbs trust Romania more than any of their other neighbors.

Romania stands ready to utilize these advantages to channel assistance to the anti-Milosevic democrats. This could take the form of "sister cities," or direct assistance to towns with democratic mayors, or help to free trade unions and non-governmental organizations. I informed President Constantinescu about the "Serbia Democratization Act," which the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

recently approved, and agreed to pursue a common strategy in the coming months.

All Romanian politicians with whom I met pleaded for an attempt to clear the Danube River of bridges destroyed by NATO during the Kosovo war. Some, like former President Ion Iliescu who opposed the NATO air campaign, argued for completely lifting sanctions against Serbia.

For the past two years the Romanian Government has pursued a fairly radical privatization of the economy, but there are practical limits on what can be done. Several large cities depend upon heavily subsidized, aging industries. The violent protests of the Jiu Valley miners have shown the political dynamite inherent in rationalizing economic reforms.

Former President Iliescu, who is significantly ahead of the current President Constantinescu in public opinion polls, strongly opposes the government reforms. Taking a populist line, Iliescu told me that the globalization of national economies has exacerbated the gap between rich and poor countries and is creating a new "democratic deficit."

As in Bosnia and Bulgaria, Romania needs a truly independent judiciary. I stressed this as a precondition for serious direct foreign investment.

Military reform is further along in Romania than in Bulgaria. The problem, however, is that the country's current economic plight makes financing the reform extremely difficult. Still, after Slovenia, Romania remains the second strongest candidate for the next round of NATO enlargement. Public support for NATO membership continues to be very high, even after the Kosovo war. In fact, several polls show that Romania has passed Poland as the most pro-American country in Europe.

One significant forward stride that Romania has made in the last few years is a historic reconciliation with its ethnic Hungarian minority, which comprises seven percent of the population. I met with Bela Marko, chairman of the ethnic Hungarian UDMR party, which is a partner in the ruling coalition, and with the rest of the party leadership. They praised the new education law as a significant move in the direction of multiculturalism, but they still feel somewhat disadvantaged in the Romanian nation-state.

It is difficult to imagine better friends of the United States in the Balkans than President Constantinescu, Prime Minister Vasile, Foreign Minister Andrei Plesu, and other top members of the current government. The U.S. should make every effort to strengthen its assistance to Romania, since a return to power of

Iliescu would effectively block the country from entering Western institutions. USAID assistance should focus on helping the Romanian Central Bank meet World Bank and IMF requirements. The U.S. should increase funding for IMET programs to help the Romanian officer corps attain English-language proficiency. Finally, the U.S., with its Western allies, should offer to clear the Danube, without rebuilding the bridges across it, thereby “putting the monkey on Milosevic’s back” to refuse the offer.

List of Meetings (not including U.S. diplomats)

● **Kosovo**

Lieutenant General (U.K.) Sir Michael Jackson, Commander, KFOR
Dr. Bernard Kouchner, Senior Representative of the U.N. Secretary General
Jock Covey, Deputy Senior Representative of the U.N. Secretary General
Brigadier General William Brandenburg, USA, Deputy Commander, KFOR
Hashim Thaci, Head, Kosovo Liberation Army, and Member, Kosovo Transitional Council
Bardhyl Mahmuti, Leader, Kosovar Party for Democratic Unity (PBD)
Jakup Krasniqi, Kosovo Liberation Army
Vetton Surroi, Editor, “Koha Ditore,” and Member, Kosovo Transitional Council
Brigadier General Joseph Peterson, USA, Commander, Camp Bondsteel

● **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Ante Jelavic, Chair, Joint Presidency
Alija Izetbegovic, Member, Joint Presidency
Zivko Radisic, Member, Joint Presidency
Dr. Haris Silajdzic, Co-Chair, Council of Ministers
Svetozar Mihajlovic, Co-Chair, Council of Ministers
Neven Tomic, Deputy Co-Chair, Council of Ministers
Jadranko Prlic, Foreign Minister
Ivo Andric-Luzanski, President, Federation
Ejup Ganic, Vice President, Federation
Edhem Bicakcic, Prime Minister, Federation
Dragan Covic, Deputy Prime Minister, Federation
Milorad Dodik, Prime Minister, Republika Srpska
Zlatko Lagumdzija, President, Social Democratic Party
Gradimir Goyer, Vice President, Social Democratic Party
Kresimir Zubak, President, New Croat Initiative

Mirko Pejanovic, President, Serb Civic Council
Ivo Komsic, former leader, Croat Peasants' Party

● **Bulgaria**

Petar Stoyanov, President
Nadezhda Mikhaylova, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Georgi Ananiev, Minister of Defense
Konstantin Dimitrov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Velizar Shalamanov, Deputy Minister of Defense
Assen Agov, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament
Nikolay Kamov, Deputy Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament
Kemal Eyoup Adil, Member of Parliament
Petar Bashikarov, Member of Parliament
Younal Lyutfi, Member of Parliament
Dimitar Stefanov, Member of Parliament
Vladimir Filipov, Foreign Policy Advisor to the President
Ivan Dimitrov, Acting Chief, Europe and North America Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Eduard Klain, Member of Parliament
Maria Ivanova Spasova-Stoyanova, Member of Parliament
George Ganchev, Member of Parliament
Ivan Glushkov, Member of Parliament
Atanas Paparizov, Member of Parliament
Antoaneta Hristova, Chief Advisor, Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament
Iva Rudnikova, Correspondent, "Kapital"

● **Romania**

Emil Constantinescu, President
Radu Vasile, Prime Minister
Andrei Plesu, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Victor Babiuc, Minister of Defense
Constantin Dudu Ionescu, Minister of Interior
Radu Berceanu, Minister of Industry and Trade
Traian Basescu, Minister of Transport
Petre Roman, President, Senate and former Prime Minister of Romania
Bogdan Mazuru, Director, Europe and North America Division, Ministry of Foreign

Affairs

**George Predescu, Deputy Director, NATO, WEU and Strategic Issues Division,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

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**Ioan Mircea Pascu, Chairman, Defense, Public Order and National Security
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**Teodor Melescanu, Senator, and President, Alliance for Romania, and former
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**Valeriu Tabara, Member, Chamber of Deputies, and President, Party of Romanian
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Teodor Stolojan, Economic Councilor, and former Prime Minister of Romania

Mircea Dan Geoana, Ambassador to the United States